

Rusk Revises Probe Pledge

Wants Security Evidence Before Appearing

BY WILLARD EDWARDS

(Chicago Tribune Press Service)

Washington, Oct. 9—Secretary

of State Dean Rusk has informed the Senate judiciary committee that he will not appear to answer charges about lax security in the state department until he is given access to all information in the committee's possession.

Rusk had been expected to testify this week but the conditions he imposed, if the committee accepted them, would delay his appearance indefinitely. The committee was reportedly as disposed to reject Rusk's demands and repeat its invitation that he submit himself to early questioning.

Charges Handed to Him

Sen. Thomas J. Dodd (D., Conn.), vice chairman of the judiciary committee's subcommittee on internal security, made a special trip to New York City a week ago to deliver to Rusk a lengthy memorandum on conditions exposed in an investigation of the bureau of security and consular affairs.

A covering letter from Chairman Jack O. Eastland (D., Miss.) asked Rusk's personal appearance to answer a long list of allegations, which included charges that state department officers had given false testimony under oath in an attempted coverup.

Over the week-end, the state department issued a brief statement citing Rusk's eagerness to testify at an early date. The committee had been attempting

to obtain his appearance for more than three months.

But when Rusk's reply was delivered, it was learned, his desire to explain the department's position in the near future appeared to have vanished.

Instead, the secretary of state specified that he first wanted to examine all the testimony given to the subcommittee in executive session and all memoranda or papers which may have been supplied to the Senate investigators by state department witnesses.

The evidence thus demanded for scrutiny covers thousands of pages and would require many days to examine. The secretary's conditions were regarded as designed to delay the investigation.

Order Statute Defied

The tone of the letter was described by one senator as arrogant; by another as evasive of a paramount issue which is the basic cause of the conflict between the committee and the state department. This is the claim of executive departments that they have the right to forbid government witnesses to testify at congressional hearings.

Employees of the bureau of security were put under notice Aug. 15 that they were forbidden to contact members of the internal security subcommittee or its staff without permission from higher officials. A congressional statute states that civil service employees may not be restrained from giving information to Congress.

The department followed up this directive by filing a letter of charges against Otto F. Otepka, chief of the evaluations branch, giving him 30-day notice of dismissal on charges

of conduct unbecoming a state department officer.

Otepka was a cooperative witness who, when summoned for interrogation by the subcommittee, described conditions in the security bureau which dismayed senators.

When he was accused by his superiors of misstating the facts, he furnished documentary proof which led to the subcommittee's conclusion that the superiors had given false testimony.

Otepka, a veteran of 27 years service in the government with highest ratings, is fighting his dismissal. He has denied charges that he violated a directive issued by President Truman in 1948, banning Congress from access to all files involving charges of disloyalty against federal workers.